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DD/M&S 73-1892

14 May 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Management and Services

VIA : Associate Deputy Director for Management and Services

FROM : Chairman, Support Officers' Advisory Group (SOAG)

SUBJECT : Perceived Apathy Among "S" Career Service Members

1. Action Requested: In this memorandum, SOAG is raising an issue which we feel needs a hearing and resolving. We recognize that the problems involved in the issue are problems you have inherited. We ask only that you exercise the leadership sorely needed to resolve this issue.

2. Background: SOAG offers these symptoms of the problems involved in the issue of apathy among "S" careerists:

a. "There will be no change." This has been an often repeated statement by senior "S" officers to those not so senior officers. We will continue to do business as usual. If you want to change things, if you're interested in management and not "support," go somewhere else. One "S" officer was told by a senior "S" officer that he (the senior man) had been shown the "Agency ten-year plan" and it called for no change in management philosophy. Obviously change has been occurring in the last two months and this should help.

b. The consensus of SOAG and those we talk with is that substantively the job of an "S" generalist does not really change from the time he is a GS-07 through a GS-16 Chief of Support. The GS numbers and the dollars change, but substantively he is doing nothing new or more challenging 20 years after he began. He is often no more a part of the management team in the component he is with in the twilight of his career than he is in the dawn of his career. In these instances this speaks poorly of the type who has chosen to become an "S" generalist.

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c. It is alleged by many "S" careerists (up to now) that within the component to which assigned, they are treated as servants and flunkies (they are to be humble and to haul when called). They are rated as unqualified to make judgments concerning substantive matters relating to the component of which they are a part. They are made to feel that the DDO is supreme. If the "S" officer's role is to continue as in the past few years, then SOAG questions the need for more college graduates to fill "S" positions.

d. With the inherent acceptance of second class status in the Agency and with no cues otherwise from "S" management, the "S" officer has felt he has no backing if he were to take a stand on any management issue in the component to which he is assigned.

e. For some of the "S" career service members there has been no action; career development and opportunity has been nil. SOAG believes the "system" tends to exploit those people who exhibit special competence in specialized areas by not allowing them to expand their career development. For certain careerists, opportunities have been unlimited. Rotations (both Headquarters and field) have been staffed over the years with the same employees. Again, this is a perception SOAG has picked up. For those who perceive their situation like this -- that a clique gets all the goodies -- a what's-the-use attitude can set in.

f. Some feel hopeless as long as "S" slots (and other M&S slots) in the DDO, DDI and DDS&T are controlled by someone other than the DDM&S.

g. One recent problem adding to the apathy of "S" careerists is an issue which "S" careerists perceive as their own leadership's complete disregard for their interests. That is the fact that there has not been a senior "S" careerist occupying the Career Management Officer position in the O/DDM&S for about a year.

h. Generally, "S" careerists have no idea how decisions affecting their careers and themselves as human beings working for CIA are being made. Most

94% HAVE BEEN  
OVERSEAS  
60% QUALIFIED  
FOR CIA AIDS

NON SECURITY?

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do not know how assignments are made. Most have no idea of the standards used in arriving at a group to be promoted. Most have no idea what a "support" officer's role should be today and in the future. Many feel that senior management is too high and too long removed to remember "my kind of problems." One asked, "What experience do you need to be a GS-15 in the 'S' service? Are, there different paths? Is it just dumb luck?"

i. SOAG believes that another symptom of the apathy we perceive is the general lack of interest in seeking more professional and personal improvement by the majority of "S" officers -- especially at the more senior levels of GS-15 and above.

j. Some feel that there is no real career counseling, a problem which aids in the generation of apathy. Career counseling should be available anytime the careerist wants it, but it would be best if the CMO would take the initiative. One person said, "I don't know of any 'S' careerist having received career counseling." Another said, "CMO interviews have left much to be desired; one almost feels they are a 'check mark' on a sheet depicting an action completed on the part of the CMO." Another says, "A more open door atmosphere must be generated by the Office of the CMO, encouraging careerists to ask about their careers, together with annual career counseling appointments." SOAG feels that perhaps the CMO's office is given too many tasks which detract from its primary job of career management of "S" careerists.

YOU HEAR  
ONLY FROM  
THOSE WHO  
ARE NOT  
SATISFIED

k. After the euphoria of the "S" Service Conference in September 1971 wore off, and the hard work on one's own time was needed, hardly a soul could be found who was interested. SOAG, through newsletters, has tried to solicit responses to several issues and ideas. To date we have one piece of correspondence except for the SOAG membership contribution. SOAG has to ask, "Does the 'S' career service membership really care about improving itself?"

l. Currently there is concern about whether there will continue to be an "S" career service. If not, then what happens to the present members of the "S" career service?

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m. The last major problem we would like to mention that has helped generate the apathy we perceive is fear. It is SOAG's concensus that fear is common among most "S" career service members. As much as management has proclaimed the open door policy, people are still afraid to speak up about what bothers them career service-wise, job-wise, about what they think they should be doing in the components in which they work, about change in role, and about how they are treated and expected to act in the jobs to which they are sent. "S" careerists tell SOAG one thing, and more often than not tell management what they think management wants to hear. We have urged people to speak up. "Are you kidding - tell them what I've told you - my career wouldn't be worth a damn," is the usual reply.

3. Staff Position: SOAG's position is that changes in attitudes regarding the management philosophy of the Directorate, the role of the "S" officer in the component in which he works, the qualifications of an "S" officer, and the career development of the "S" officer are molded at the top and should be communicated down from the top. We feel the "S" cadre needs to be jolted out of its passive state and then reinforced over time in order to come to a new understanding of how it fits into the Agency organizational structure. SOAG has to wonder, "Is the 'S' cadre beyond help?" Whether a group so ingrained with passive behavior patterns over a 20 year period will respond to a behavior role calling for proaction, change, openness with management, trust, competence in new disciplines, questioning, accountability, decision-making, and leadership is questionable. SOAG's position further is that knowledge of your ability as a manager is known, but SOAG feels that you must decisively make known your role of leader.

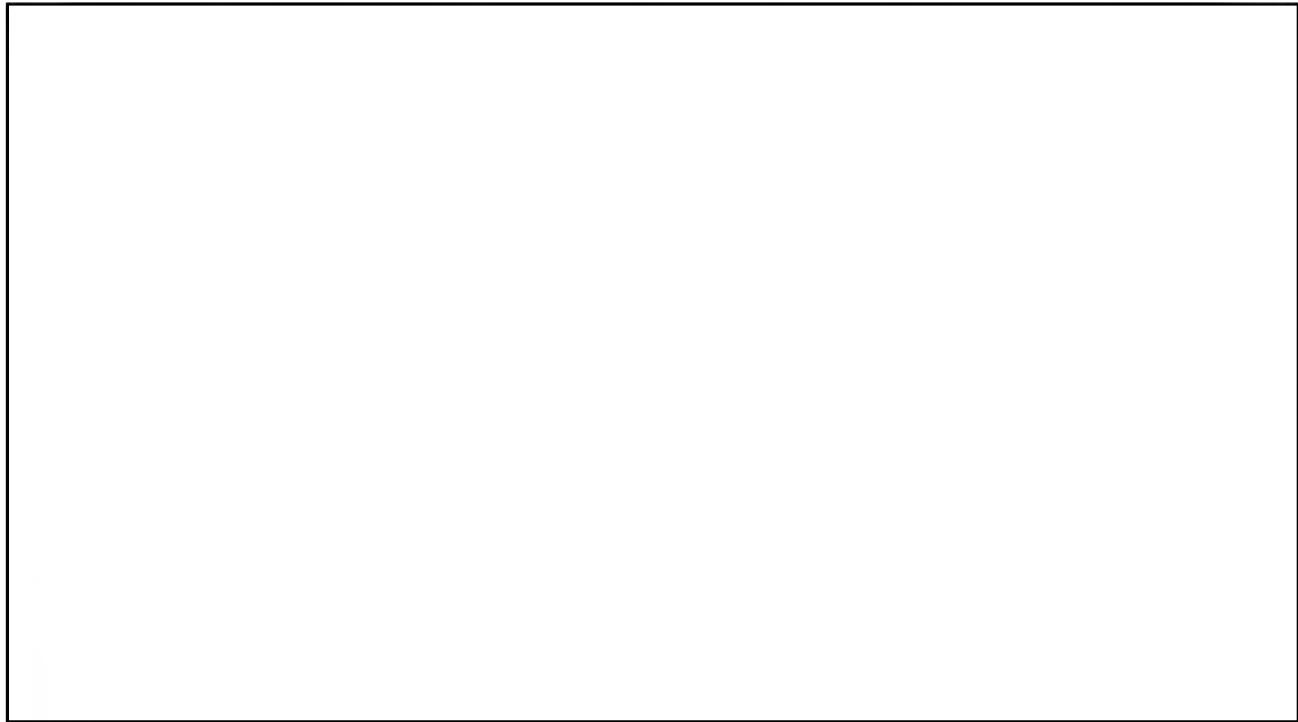
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4. Recommendation: SOAG recommends that, as head of the "S" career service, you make known to the membership of the "S" service in a forum of your own choosing what you expect of them and what they can expect from you.

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**Distribution:**

Orig - Adse (DD/M&S Subject)

~~1 - DD/M&S Chrono~~

1 - SOAG

The only constant in the universe is change. It is a fact which must be given credence for life to be worthwhile. The ability to not only recognize that fact but to use it, to personal or organizational advantage, can oftentimes make the difference between a "humdrum" existence and one charged with vigor.

The Agency has always prided itself on its ability to respond, surely, timely and effectively, to changing situations. It can transport materiel anywhere in the world, it can deliver a life-saving serum to a remote area in an astonishingly short time, it can engage in complex funding operations, it can exfiltrate defectors. It can do almost anything that it wants to do as long as it can identify the problem. For more than 25 years, the Agency has responded to the needs and requirements of the National Security Council and its intelligence community members. But the Agency has had less success in responding to the needs of its own employees.

Part of the problem is tied up in the Agency's passive nature. The Agency, by charter and tradition, reacts. In a real sense, it does not know how to lead. The idea of managing the careers of its personnel in some meaningful, active way is more often than not an anathema. Why? One reason is that the Agency is not subject to public pressure or scrutiny. If a young employee performs well but because of undefined "circumstances" goes unpromoted, he or she cannot take their grievances to the Civil Service Commission, or to their Senator, or to their Congressman, or to the newspapers. Several young officers have queried their supervisors about the lack of upward mobility of their careers, and have been told, "Well, I guess your career just fell between the cracks." The operative word here is career. It is not some ambiguous, bureaucratic word; it is synonymous with life, and to be told that, after some degree of sacrifice to the Agency, a period of one's life has gone virtually unnoticed, by those charged with doing the noticing, tends to shadow one's feelings about the quality of personnel management.

The argument can be made that employees of other federal agencies are similarly bound, albeit by informal restrictions (complainers are not promoted) rather than the threat of being hauled into court. But the fact is that they can freely make constructive criticism and hope, and occasionally witness (e.g., the overhaul of the Foreign Service) its impact. Employees

of this Agency can also freely make constructive criticism, but how often do they see relevant change? How often does constructive criticism lead to a hardened defensive posture by those responsible for a decision, policy or procedure which is the focus of the criticism?

One pervasive root cause of this is the intellectual dishonesty of senior and middle management, inculcated by tradition and reinforced by regulations. Senior management is afraid of serious objective introspection. The secret of success is unquestioning faith in the Agency. But young people entering on duty, brought up in a generation accustomed to penetrating questioning of anachronistic values, soon realize that in order to maintain a viable career, they have to believe, unhesitatingly and without doubt. If one does not believe, he either prostitutes himself and passively agrees to co-optation, or he resigns. Within a relatively short time frame, a good percentage of the best employees will have left, leaving a large number who are more interested in grade, or promotion than in bettering the quality of the Agency. And so it goes, ad nauseum, with management replacing management, all free of "pernicious" iconoclasts. This Agency is structurally a secular church with those who do <sup>not</sup> believe eventually relegated to the position of excommunicants, while the never-questioning faithful ascend in the hierarchy. The entire structure, safe from outside scrutiny is then peopled with "ostriches," with their heads in the sands of mutual back-slapping, promotions, and co-optation.

One critic of the Agency said that the image of the organization as "an efficient, well-run machine capable of almost any act of intrigue" is a myth. Instead, he said, the Agency is "an insufferable bureaucratic morass with little or no direction, sorely needing drastic change." He further went on to say that it was NOT his purpose "to foster or promote the naive notion that we do not need a CIA. It is merely a human institution badly in need of change." It needs to modify its structure to respond, not to a pressing requirement from the White House, but to a pressing need from its own employees. It needs to take forceful, decisive action in cleaning out the bureaucratic arteriosclerosis which has set in. It has the means, it now needs the resolve to identify all the problems and come to grips with solving them. It needs to recognize that a mark of organizational maturity is the ability to promote, from below to positions above, people who are capable of doing better jobs than those doing the promoting. It needs to appreciate the fact that its people are human resources, not automatons merely in place to be exploited.

One highly visible aspect of intellectual dishonesty is the lack of vertical communications. People in lower positions do possess a sense of temerity about freely, honestly communicating their thoughts and feelings to their supervisors. How many times do employees react, when faced with an unexpected call to see

their supervisors, with the attitude: "What does he want to see me about? What have I done wrong?" The element of possible tort is pervasive. No one, it seems, wants to unilaterally make a hard decision for fear of being blamed if something goes wrong. The remedy, of course, is multi-faceted. Cables and dispatches require innumerable signatures, sometimes referred to as coordination, and oftentimes referred to as spreading the potential guilt. Decisions are made by indecision, and of course, there is management by conflict avoidance -- don't rock the boat. Promotion policies befuddle a significant number of people. We all are cognizant of the propaganda which says that incompetents are never promoted because the criteria for promotion are well known, and the Agency never promotes the wrong people or makes bad assignments. How many people have met or exceeded the criteria for promotion, but were not promoted for "unknown" reasons, or because their careers "fell through the cracks?"

The comments about the Agency are also, of course, applicable to the Support Directorate. There is a very real feeling that we are the least "co-equal" of the directorates. A Support officer is generally not viewed by the rest of the Agency as a professional, or oftentimes a member of the "team." Support people are usually accepted, and occasionally respected, only insofar as they do not get in the way of operations. How many Support people are ever consulted in trying to improve an operation? As long as the funds and materiel are available, Support people are accepted. It is a rather interesting incongruity that if a finance officer loses money, his career may be blunted, but if an ops officer loses money, he simply makes a certification. If a Support officer is involved in a flap involving support matters, his career comes under a shadow; if an ops officer is involved in a flap involving operational matters and is declared persona non grata, he is promoted. One is a bungler, the other an operator.

As the Agency has a tradition of reacting, the Support Directorate has a tradition of following the followers, to the extent that it does not really know how to lead. It has the capability to be pro-active instead of reactive, but it is loath to do so. The Directorate is staffed at many levels by managers who do not want to manage, leaders who do not want to lead and decision-makers who do not want to make decisions. The lack of volition is compounded by the lack of accountability. If managers and their employees are not accountable for their actions in a positive sense, the desire to innovate and motivate is lost.

People at all levels must be given the opportunity to actively participate in the management process, and given the opportunity, they must then be accountable for their actions, free to rise or fall on the merits of their decisions. No rational human being is going to be motivated to do a better job if he himself

does an excellent job and goes unrewarded, while his peers may be promoted for lesser performances. It simply does not impress those who are free of the fetters of the bureaucratic mold that they cannot be promoted because of "budgetary constraints" or "Career Service Grade Authorization." All that is so much falderol when all one has to do is look around and see the incongruities of waste. It may take courage to see through a tour in the wilderness of Southeast Asia, but it takes more courage to take one's head out of the sand and look around. The incestuousness of the Agency in general, and each directorate in particular, obviates the need for objective introspection, so that by logical progression, we have a situation where the majority of the lower graded individuals do the looking and listening while the supergrades do the talking. Perhaps it is time to re-order some of our priorities.

The Support officer must be put into a position where he can be respected as a professional. It is fine for Support officers to think that they all are, but few managers outside the directorate share our own feeling. More attention should be given to full-time academic training at leading schools of business and public administration. More attention should be paid to cross-fertilization with other directorates. There are a great many Support officers who would make excellent operations officers, and for that matter, vice versa. We simply have to stop being put into positions where the key to success is humility. There is no direct or vicarious pleasure in being talked down to all of the time. There is no fun in dirty work when the Support officer is the only one doing it. A team is only as good as its members, and perhaps it is about time for the Support Directorate to move from the end of the line to the backfield.

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PLEASE — NO OVER-REACTION  
THIS PAPER IS NOT TO  
BE DENIED — WE DO HAVE  
SOME PROBLEMS — BUT  
I BELIEVE THIS IS A  
"WORST CASE" PRESENTATION.  
I HAVE SOME THOUGHTS  
WHEN YOU HAVE TIME TO  
DISCUSS



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## ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

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Support Officers' Advisory Group

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1.  
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To 1, 2 & 3:

The SOAG Charter (Para 3a) states in part that SOAG will, "identify issues or problems... for the consideration of the Deputy Director for Management & Services (vice Support)." In the issue presented in the attached memorandum, SOAG is exercising this responsibility. We realize that the issue, as presented, is controversial. For the issue to receive a full hearing, we urge you to seek counsel from members of the "S" career service other than SOAG.

To 3:

I am attaching a paper which accompanied the resignation of [redacted] a former "S" officer who resigned in January 1973 after 7 years with CIA. Maybe Mike's thoughts say it all better than SOAG does. Mike [redacted] is now an officer with [redacted]

Chairman, Support Officers' Advisory Group